

REMARKS

Reconsideration and further examination of the above-identified application are respectfully requested in view of the Request for Continued Examination submitted herewith and in view of the amendments and the discussion that follows.

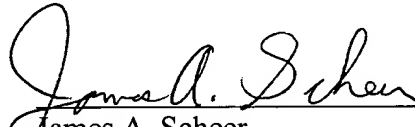
Claim 1-41 are pending in this application. Claims 1-3, 7-10 14-16, 20-23, 28-30 and 34-37 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Pub. No. 2001/0032120 to Stuart et al. ("Stuart"). Claim 27 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Stuart in view of Official Notice. Claims 4-6, 11-13, 17-19, 24-26, 31-33, and 38-41 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Stuart in view of Applicant's prior art and Official Notice. Claims 14, 27, 28 and 41 have been amended. Claim 42 was previously canceled. After a careful review of the claims and references, it is believed that the claims as amended are in allowable form and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 7-10, 14-16, 20-23, 28-30 and 34-37 have been rejected as being anticipated by Stuart. Independent claims 1, 14, 27, 28 and 41 call for automatically adjusting the performance threshold in response to a change in a parameter related to the task. Thus, the threshold is adjusted, for example, for such factors as time of day, or complexity of the bill. This feature is not disclosed or suggested by Stuart or any of the other cited references. Stuart at the passage cited by the Office Action (paragraphs 27 and 48) discusses flexible thresholds manually set by management but does not disclose automatic threshold adjustment (or even manual adjustment of set thresholds) nor does it describe adjusting them in response to a change in a parameter related to the task. As a result, neither Stuart nor the other cited references disclose this feature which is claimed in all the independent claims. Thus, the independent claims 1, 14, 27, 28, and 41 are neither anticipated nor rendered obvious by any combination of the cited references and are therefore believed to be allowable. In addition, dependent claims 2-13, 15-26, and 29-40 are dependent upon now allowable claims 1, 14, 27, 28 and 41 and are therefore also believed to be allowable.

While applicants disagree with the Examiner's Official Notice position, they are moot in view of the arguments above.

As discussed above, claim 1-41 are not anticipated or rendered obvious by any combination of the cited references. Therefore, allowance of claims 1-41 is believed to be in order and such action is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of the subject application, he is respectfully requested to telephone applicant's undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,


James A. Scheer
Registration No. 29, 434

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WELSH & KATZ, LTD
120 South Riverside Plaza, 22nd Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60606
(312) 655-1500 Telephone
(312) 655-1501 Facsimile